

Subject: Request for Applications (RFA) Number: RFA-WATIH-1295
Title of Opportunity: Private Partnerships for Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health in Senegal
Issue Date: July 12, 2021
Deadline for Questions/Clarifications: July 30, 2021 at 5:00pm West Africa Time
Pre-Submission Conference August 5, 2021
Closing Date: September 9, 2021 at 5:00pm West Africa Time

The West Africa Trade and Investment Hub (hereinafter referred to as the Trade Hub) is seeking applications from eligible applicants to fund a program entitled *Private Partnerships for Maternal, Neonatal, Child, and Adolescent Health in Senegal*. See Section C of Attachment 1 for eligibility requirements. To be eligible for award, the applicant must meet these requirements and provide all information as required in this RFA. An award/Awards will be made to the eligible and responsible applicant(s) whose application(s) best meet(s) the program objectives and selection criteria contained in Sections A and E of Attachment 1 respectively.

An eligible organization interested in applying for funding under this opportunity is encouraged to read this RFA thoroughly to understand the type of program sought, application submission requirements, and evaluation process. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has received the RFA from the internet in its entirety. The Trade Hub bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from the transmission or conversion process.

An application must be submitted directly to the Trade Hub electronically via its online grants management system, SMART. To prepare and submit an application, applicants must first register in the system by submitting a registration request via the following link: <https://smart.fluxx.io/apply/watih>. Once registered, applicants will receive an email with login instructions. Applications must be received no later than the deadline for applications stated above.

Any questions concerning this RFA must be submitted in writing to grants@westafricatih.com. All questions must be received no later than the deadline for questions/clarifications stated above. Responses to questions received prior to this deadline will be furnished to all potential applicants through an amendment to this notice.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Trade Hub nor does it commit the Trade Hub to pay for any costs incurred by a potential applicant while preparing/submitted questions or an application. All preparation/submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

Applicants are hereby informed that the Trade Hub does not, under any circumstances, appoint agents to act on its behalf. Any engagement by Applicants with anybody purporting to be a Trade Hub agent is entirely at the Applicant's own cost and risk.

Thank you for your interest in this opportunity.

Sincerely,



Michael Clements
Chief of Party
West Africa Trade and Investment Hub

Attachments

- Attachment 1:** Request for Applications
- Attachment 2:** Technical Application Template
- Attachment 3:** Trade Hub Performance Indicators
- Attachment 4:** Guide on Gender and Youth Integration for Applicants
- Attachment 5:** Trade Hub Leverage & In-Kind Contribution Policy
- Attachment 6:** Provisions
- Attachment 7:** Certifications
- Attachment 8:** Environmental Review Guide
- Attachment 9:** Conflict Risk Checklist
- Attachment 10:** Budget Template

Attachment 1: Request for Applications (RFA)

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Despite impressive progress in several health status indicators in Senegal, these gains remain both fragile and uneven within the country, with substantial variation in health outcomes geographically as well as by age and gender. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) works to improve the health status of Senegal's women, children, and other vulnerable populations. USAID/Senegal is supporting the health sector to help Senegal advance further along its journey to self-reliance. Self-reliance in health is a function of Senegal's capacity and commitment to deliver and finance health care in partnership with public and private sectors, civil society, community, and faith-based organizations.

To this end, USAID is assisting Senegal to improve its health system so it can reduce child and maternal deaths, protect communities from infectious diseases, and contribute to an AIDS-free generation. Much of this assistance is through health initiatives in the public sector. However, USAID recognizes the important roles the commercial (private) sector plays in achieving improvements in health care in the country.

Senegal's health system includes both public sector and private sector (for-profit and nonprofit entities) providers. The public sector operates hospitals, health centers, and public health posts. Regional hospitals provide specialized care, while district health centers provide first-level referrals and limited hospitalization services. Health posts provide preventive and primary curative services, prenatal care, FP, and health promotion/education activities. Health huts, managed by local communities, are at the base of Senegal's health care pyramid.

The vibrant private health care sector in Senegal includes for-profit entities as well as non-profit non-government organizations (NGOs), faith-based organizations (FBOs), networks, and civil society organizations. Non-profit private health service providers play a smaller, but important, role in health service provision in Senegal—particularly in rural and peri-urban areas where NGO clinics fill a critical health coverage gap. Most for-profit private sector health facilities are concentrated in the capital, Dakar, and other urban centers.

Health-Related Co-Investment Opportunities:

USAID is looking to co-invest with a private sector firm to address some of Senegal's challenges in improving reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and, adolescent health (RMNCAH). It seeks a company with the creativity to bring innovative solutions to RMNCAH service-delivery issues and the capacity to implement those solutions. In doing so, a key measurement of the success of the innovations would be tangible examples of increased availability and utilization of RMNCAH products or services.

Companies are invited to propose business growth projects for co-investment in one of three option areas. The first two options are existing ideas for initiatives related to RMNCAH care. The third option is undefined to allow firms with innovative ideas for growth to improve and increase RMNCAH goods or services to propose a project for growth which a company may consider equally important and promising. The Trade Hub and USAID will select one to three submitted concepts for a full investment proposal, based on its merits and potential contribution to improving RMNCAH in Senegal and contributing to the health system. The selected activity must complement other systemic efforts supported by USAID/Senegal that work to improve RMNCAH outcomes in the country.

Concept Option 1: Quality Generic Drugs for Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent and Health

Context:

In Senegal, most pharmacies are commercial, operating on a for-profit basis, and are located in Dakar or larger towns. Interior sections of the country, as a result, are less well covered by commercial entities.

Within the health sector, a persistent challenge has been the uninterrupted availability of quality drugs and other health products at all levels of the health system. The private sector comprises about 80% of the pharmaceutical market in Senegal. According to a recent study, the market for pharmaceuticals in the country is expected to grow more than 10% per year over the next four or five years. Although some drugs are produced locally, many are imported. An uninterrupted and reliable supply of quality essential drugs and health products, particularly lower-cost generic drugs, is an important part of comprehensive health care delivery. Initiatives have begun to promote local production through the revitalization of existing industries with the objective of locally covering 50% of the health sector's need for pharmaceutical products by 2035.

At present, private pharmacists may have an incentive to sell branded rather than generic medicines because their standard retail markup (often around 25%) will earn them more on the higher-priced branded product and less on a lower-cost generic product. Making locally produced quality generic drugs a more viable option to the consumer in Senegal may require new ways to address this disincentive and encourage pharmacists to promote the use of generics more actively. New options in pricing policies might be explored in which the margin on branded products and the margin on generic products are made equivalent in absolute terms rather than as a percentage. Creativity in product pricing is a private-sector strength.

Other issues related to drugs in the marketplace are quality-assurance and drug authenticity. The introduction of new packaging systems for generic drugs might help consumers to differentiate between high quality, verified products and those of unknown quality or authenticity. Some drugs have a limited shelf-life or cold-chain needs. Innovations in commercial distribution systems, wholesale warehousing, and cold-chain integrity might reduce drug product wastage and increase consistent RMNCAH product supply across the country.

Development Hypothesis Option 1:

If USAID/Senegal invests in private sector firms that can make quality generic drugs, which are essential for reducing maternal and child mortality, more widely available, then effective treatment options will become more accessible and affordable while stock-outs of key drugs in both private and public health care outlets will diminish. The contribution of private sector efforts in this area would be enhanced through coordination with Senegal's Ministry of Health and the production or distribution of drugs specified in the Ministry's prescribed treatment protocols for the main causes of maternal, infant, and child mortality.

Option 1 Activity Objectives:

An activity for Option 1 would co-invest with USAID in efforts within Senegal which will contribute to the increased value and wider geographic coverage of generic drug sales and distribution related to maternal health and child survival. Such initiatives may include the application of improved technologies and management practices for the production and distribution of generic drugs essential for the reduction of maternal and child morbidity and mortality.

At least one private sector program was recently launched to market additional generic drugs in Senegal. However, it appears this program will focus, at least initially, on drugs for such therapeutic areas as hypertension, diabetes, and cancer. The need for easily accessible and affordable generic drugs specific to treating priority RMNCAH health issues (according to the list established by the Ministry of Health) may still remain.

The list of drugs essential to priority RMNCAH care in Senegal is defined by the Ministry of Health. Examples of drugs, often considered a priority in RMNCAH service delivery, include:

- For maternal health, those used in the management of postpartum hemorrhage, severe pre-eclampsia and eclampsia, maternal sepsis, sexually transmitted infections (e.g. chlamydia, gonococcal infections, and syphilis), preterm birth and malaria;
- For children, medicines for treating pneumonia, diarrhea, malaria, neonatal sepsis, vitamin A deficiency and tuberculosis; and,
- For pediatric palliative care, medicines for vitamin A deficiency, as well as medicines for neonatal care.

USAID/Senegal envisions that this Option 1 Activity will support innovations in making essential maternal and child health-related generic drugs more widely available in Senegal. The Activity seeks an evidence-based implementation approach with the greatest chance of success in achieving one or more of the following objectives.

Objective 1.1: Increase the volume and range of locally produced maternal-child-adolescent-health-essential generic drugs available in the Senegalese market.

- An increase in the number of RMNCAH-essential generic drugs actively distributed in the Senegalese market.
- A growth in the range of different RMNCAH-essential generic drugs available and distributed in Senegal.
- Increased sales of RMNCAH-essential generic drugs within the Senegalese market.

Objective 1.2: Broaden the sub-national geographic distribution of locally produced maternal child adolescent health essential generic drugs in Senegal.

- An increase in the total number of private pharmacies offering RMNCAH-essential generic drugs.
- Increased number of non-urban districts reached by distribution networks delivering RMNCAH-essential generic drugs directly to pharmacies.

Objective 1.3: Apply innovations in maintaining adherence with quality assurance standards and improvements in creative marketing for locally produced RMNCAH-essential generic drugs distributed and competitive in the Senegal pharmaceutical market.

- Distributed RMNCAH-essential generic drugs are easily identifiable as authentic, effective, and quality medicines.
- Absolute margins-of-returns for retail pharmacists on RMNCAH-essential generic drugs are competitive with branded versions.

Concept Option 2: Applying New Telecommunication and Information Technologies to RMNCAH Service-Delivery

Context:

One of the issues facing the health system in Senegal is the need to address health disparities between Senegal's districts. Across Senegal's 79 health districts, conditions affecting access to and utilization of RMNCAH goods and services vary. Differences in the specifics of the local information infrastructure (such as access to the internet) can also occur.

Increasingly, health care systems around the world now offer types of mobile health platforms, utilizing communications and information technologies, to deliver essential health services to the population beyond the walls of a health facility. Often in these examples, health workers and patients use their own mobile phones for healthcare, bearing the cost themselves. Mobile communication can be used in a variety of ways to enhance RMNCAH services, such as by reminding patients to attend their clinic visits themselves; sending test results to patients; or, providing a virtual consultation with a provider of specialized healthcare.

Innovations in communications, or telemedicine, can help spread limited health and clinical resources across a wider geographic area and can increase the access of rural residents to specialized health care. The use of such telemedicine innovations could enhance not only access to RMNCAH care at the primary level but also the quality of RMNCAH care provided in secondary care facilities or rural hospitals. Similarly, communication and telemedicine innovations can also enhance the work of RMNCAH providers by providing new alternatives for patient record-keeping, storage and transmission of medical information, health worker training and supervision.

Development Hypothesis Option 2:

If USAID/Senegal invests in private sector firms that provide improvements in communications and provision of electronic-based health information support for the health sector in the country, then effective RMNCAH service options will become more accessible across all levels of care and health districts. The contribution of private-sector efforts in connecting the consumer of RMNCAH services with the range of care available through both public and private sector health systems would enhance the quality of RMNCAH care.

Option 2 Activity Objectives:

An activity for Option 2 would co-invest with USAID in efforts within Senegal which will contribute to the increased value and wider geographic coverage of mobile communication and other information technologies to better connect health care consumers with important RMNCAH services.

USAID/Senegal envisions that this Option 2 Activity will support innovations in the application of communication and information technologies to improve access to and use of essential maternal-and-child Health care in Senegal. Firms with significant existing capacities in communication and information technologies are in a good position to bring new innovations to bear in helping to expand the reach of health services within the country. The Activity for Option 2 needs an evidence-based implementation approach with the greatest chance of success in achieving the following objectives.

Objective 2.1: Increase the geographic outreach of RMNCAH service delivery through telecommunication and remote electronic access connecting health care users with RMNCAH service providers.

- An increase in the number of districts offering patient contact and follow-up RMNCAH services (particularly for vulnerable patients) through telecommunication or remote information technology.
- Increased number of non-urban districts reached by RMNCAH telecommunication and information technology platforms.

Objective 2.2: Through the utilization of telecommunication and information technologies, improve patient monitoring, timeliness of care, and provider-patient communications for RMNCAH services within the healthcare system.

- The percentage of primary care facilities offering remote follow-up services through communication technologies increased.
- A reduction in the average time required to provide RMNCAH test results and service-provider follow-up to health care consumers utilizing a primary care facility in Senegal.

Objective 2.3: Expand the telecommunication and remote information access alternatives for training, supervision and health worker management for RMNCAH service delivery.

- An increase in the number of primary RMNCAH facilities utilizing telecommunication or remote information technology for the training, supervision, and support of RMNCAH service providers.

Concept Option 3: New Ideas to Improve and Increase RMNCAH Services or Outcomes

Context:

The creativity and resourcefulness of the private sector in Senegal may have other excellent ideas for ways to contribute to better RMNCAH services or outcomes and help achieve the RMNCAH goals the Ministry of Health has identified for the health sector. USAID/Senegal is interested in hearing about these and is willing to consider co-investing in such an endeavor.

Development Hypothesis Option 3:

If USAID/Senegal invests in a private sector firm's creative and innovative approach for improving RMNCAH services, then the company's successful application of this innovation will result in new opportunities for better RMNCAH outcomes in the country.

Option 3 Activity Objectives:

Specific objectives for an Option 3 Activity would be dependent upon the nature of the innovations or creative approach proposed by a private sector firm. In general, the overall objective for any effort for Option 3 needs to be some form of a significant improvement in RMNCAH outcomes and to the RMNCAH benefit of health care consumers in Senegal.

The applicant is expected to propose an RMNCAH-relevant set of objectives, measures, and life-of-grant targets for increased and improved RMNCAH services.

Any concept proposed for Option 3 Activity should utilize an evidence-based implementation approach with a realistic chance of success in achieving the identified objectives. Quantifiable measurement of progress is required.

B. AWARD INFORMATION

1. Authorizing Legislation

Any award made under this RFA is authorized in accordance with the contract between Creative Associates International, Inc. (Creative) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

2. Monitoring Requirement

Potential grantees will be required to detail how they will monitor the impact of their proposed activity, notably the resources that will be required to ensure a high standard of data is being recorded and reported based on set indicators in adherence to the Trade Hub's Activity Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. (See Attachment 3: Trade Hub Performance Indicators Table)

3. Gender

Activities under the Trade Hub seek to reduce gender disparities in access to and benefits from investments. To this end, potential applicants will be expected to outline how their activities will increase access to technologies to improve production, expand access to and enhance women's skills and access to better paid opportunities. Applicants who demonstrate the potential for large scale impacts on women will be prioritized.

If selected to submit a full application, applicants will be expected to participate in a training that the activity will provide on gender and work with Trade Hub designated staff in the co-creation phase to ensure gender is adequately addressed in the proposal. (See Attachment 4: Guide on Gender and Youth Integration for Applicants).

4. Youth

In addition to promoting gender equality, the Trade Hub also strongly promotes integrating a growing youth population within the workforce (age 15 to 29). Applicants should describe how youth will benefit from the grant and serve as agents for sustained business growth. Applicants that include elements to promote vocational training and internship programs, offer technical training to facilitate youth integration, and/or target private-sector investment to meet

workforce demand for youth will be prioritized. (See Attachment 4: Guide on Gender and Youth Integration for Applicants).

5. Environmental Considerations

All activities implemented under the Trade Hub must adhere to 22 CFR 216 on environmental compliance. Please refer to the following links for additional information:

Environmental compliance background information:

https://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance

Information on how the Agency will ensure environmental soundness and compliance in design and implementation when required by the 22 CFR 216 determination (ADS 204):

<http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-200>

Please refer to the Trade Hub's Environmental Review Guide included as Attachment 8.

6. Source Nationality

Grantees will be required to procure all commodities and services in accordance with 22 CFR 228 "Rules on Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID Federal Program Funds." The authorized source for procurement is Geographic Code 937, which means the procurement of commodities and/or services can be from the U.S., the recipient country, and developing countries other than advanced developing countries, but excluding any country that is a prohibited source.

See ADS 310 for further details (<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/310.pdf>).

7. Purchase of IT Equipment

See ADS 303.3.35.2 for certain restrictions on the procurement of telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303.pdf>

8. Construction Activities

Note that no construction activities will be funded by the Trade Hub for any approved grant activity.

9. Profit/Income

Grantees must account for all income earned under the implementation of the grant in accordance with 2 CFR 200.307 (or the Standard Provision entitled Program Income for non-U.S. organizations). Income earned under the implementation of a grant shall be added to the Activity. According to 2 CFR 200.80, Program Income means gross income earned by the recipient that is directly generated by a supported activity or earned as a result of the award (see exclusions in 2 CFR 200.307 (f) and (g)). Program income includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed, the use or rental of real or personal property acquired under the award being implemented, the sale of commodities or items fabricated under the award being implemented, license fees and royalties on patents and copyrights, principal and interest on loans made with funds received from the Trade Hub. Interest earned on advances of funds received from the Trade Hub is not program income. Except as otherwise provided in Federal statutes, regulations, or the terms and conditions of the award, program income does not include rebates, credits, discounts, and interest earned on any of them. See also 2 CFR 200.407.

10. Risk of Conflict

Each Trade Hub co-investment grant is susceptible to disruption caused by violent extremism (VE), criminality, corruption, and long-standing conflicts over land rights, among other factors. These factors, individually or collectively, can contribute to a breakdown in the effective functioning of agricultural value chains and related services. Conversely, well-structured Trade Hub activities that take place in the same or proximate locations as conflict can work against “spoiler” interests who capitalize on the lack of opportunity for jobs and income. Applicants that advance beyond the EOI stage will be required to complete and update the Conflict Risk Assessment included.

11. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Contemplated

Subject to the availability of funds, the Trade Hub plans to issue up to three (3) awards under this RFA. The total estimated amount of funding available is \$720,000. The total value of each award is estimated to range from \$100,000 to \$500,000. As the amount of an award is subject to negotiation, a negotiated award amount may or may not fall within this range. Furthermore, the Trade Hub is not obligated to issue awards/an award up to the amount of funds available.

The Trade Hub reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

12. Period of Performance

The estimated start date will be upon signature of award. The duration of grant awards made under the RFA are subject to the program requirements and negotiations but are expected to be for multiple years with an end date that does not exceed April 30, 2024.

13. Award Mechanisms

The Trade Hub’s final determination on award mechanism will be based on its assessment of an applicant’s risk prior to award. If this assessment identifies weaknesses or deficiencies that call into question the applicant’s ability to manage an award, the Trade Hub may elect to remove the applicant from consideration under this funding opportunity or select a mechanism more appropriate for the applicant’s current capacity.

The most common award mechanisms issued by the Trade Hub are fixed amount awards (FAAs). Under FAAs, payments are performance based and issued to an awardee after its successful completion of pre-defined programmatic milestones. The Trade Hub also may elect to issue a cost-reimbursable award in instances when: a) an applicant demonstrates sufficient financial management capacity to implement this mechanism and b) the mechanism is determined to be appropriate for implementing the program description.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for award under this opportunity, an applicant must demonstrate that it falls into one of the grantee categories below:

- a. Private Sector Companies – both local and international firms.
- b. Foreign Organizations (referred to as non-U.S. NGOs): either nonprofit or for-profit organizations that meet the definition in 2 CFR 200.47.
- c. Non-profit Organizations: Organizations that meet the definition of 2 CFR 200.70.
- d. For-Profit Organizations

Government entities are not eligible to apply.

Additionally, an applicant must be officially registered and working in compliance with all applicable civil and fiscal regulations, including but not limited to pertinent local laws and status. In lieu of official registration, an applicant may still be eligible for award if it shows proof of effort to secure registration, exemption from registration, or cause for why registration is not optional or practicable.

2. Cost Sharing or Leverage

Cost share/leverage is required under this funding opportunity.

All grants must include cost share/leverage of private sector resources, assets, capabilities, and expertise. The value of private sector resources, assets, capabilities, and expertise (cash and in-kind) contributed to the implementation of the grant activity must at least equal (1:1 match) the monetary resources provided by the Trade Hub; however, co-investments with leverage ratios up to 5:1 or higher are preferred. It is strongly encouraged that companies/organizations propose private sector resources, assets, capabilities, and expertise that exceed the 1:1 match minimum. As such, proposed projects that exceed the 1:1 match minimum will be prioritized.

Cost-share or leverage can be either cash (e.g., from operating cash flow, donor funds or other), rate discounts, services, material or third-party contributions, such as equity investors loans from financial institutions, or a combination thereof. Other USG funding sources are not accepted for cost-share or leverage requirements. Examples of in-kind contributions that may be counted include:

- Commodities;
- Use of training or other purpose-specific facilities necessary to a program's implementation;
- Value of time donated by technical consultants or company employees whose work and expertise are necessary to a project;
- Value of salaries for staff dedicated to a project;
- Technology, communications and capital assets;
- Intellectual property rights; and/or
- Licenses.

When determining whether the private sector resources and contributions can count toward meeting the 1:1 (preferably up to 5:1 or more) matching requirement, the Trade Hub will consider the following criteria:

Attribution and Additionality

- The contribution must support and advance the objectives and activities of the project;
- The contribution must be based upon the active engagement of the private sector partner in the design and development of the partnership;
- The application of the resources and contributions to activities under the proposed alliance must be attributable to the private sector entity's anticipated or actual engagement with the Trade Hub; and
- The provision or application of the resources must be qualitatively and/or quantitatively different than what the entity would have done in the absence of anticipated or actual engagement with the Trade Hub.

Nature and Origin – The contributions and resources must be private in nature and origin, come from a critical and core partner to the partnership; and come from one or more of the following sources:

- Private for-profit entities such as a business, corporation, or private firm;
- Private equity or private financial institutions, including private investment firms, mutual funds, or insurance companies;
- Private investors (individuals or groups);

- Private business or industry associations, including but not limited to chambers of commerce and related types of entities;

Value Proposition and Development Impact – The resources and contributions mobilized from the private sector should, in combination with the support provided by the Trade Hub, provide the partnership with a comparative advantage in achieving significant and sustainable impact on the targeted development challenge.

Measurability – The resources and contributions must be something of value that can be measured in some form that permits evaluation of the contribution’s impact on achieving desired results.

Composition – Most of the private sector resources should come in the form of cash, equity capital, with a letter of intent from the equity investor, and or debt capital with a letter of commitment from the financial institution.

Timing of Private Sector Resource Commitments and Contributions – The mobilization, contribution, provision and/or application of the resources can take place at any time during the development or implementation of the partnership.

Cost-share and leverage comprise resources, assets, capabilities, and expertise that are not part of the amount in grant funds contributed by the Trade Hub. They are, however, treated differently:

- a. Leverage strictly comes from the private sector, while cost-share does not;
- b. Cost-share is binding and auditable under an award agreement, while leverage is not;
- c. The determination of what constitutes leverage is based on the objectives, considerations, and criteria set forth at:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/GDA-APS - Partnering for Impact APS-OAA-21-00001 - 10.14.2020.pdf>

The determination of what constitutes cost-share is set for at 2 CFR 200.306 and ADS 303.3.10.

For further guidance, see Attachment 5: Trade Hub Leverage & In-Kind Contribution Policy.

3. Limit on Number of Applications

An eligible organization may submit only one (1) application. Please note that issuance of this RFA does not in any way obligate the Trade Hub to pay for costs incurred by a prospective applicant to prepare and submit an application.

D. APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Content and Form of Application Submission

An application must be submitted in two separate parts: a) Technical Application and b) Cost Application. To prepare both parts, an applicant must use the templates provided in Attachments 2 and 3, which provide instructions on the required content and format. An applicant not adhering to these instructions risks being considered nonresponsive to the requirements of the RFA and eliminated from further consideration.

The Trade Hub will accept applications submitted in English and French and give equal attention to both.

2. Method for Submission

The Trade Hub receives all applications electronically via its online grants management portal, which can be accessed at the following link: <https://smart.fluxx.io/>. If an applicant has not previously registered in the portal, it must complete an initial registration form, which can be found at the following link:

<https://smart.fluxx.io/apply/watih>

Upon review and validation of the registration form by the Trade Hub, the applicant will receive an email with its username and password.

An applicant should retain for its records one (1) copy of its application and all enclosures that accompany it.

Should an applicant experience any difficulties submitting an application, it should contact the Grants Department via email at grants@westafricatih.com.

3. Registration Requirements for U.S. Government Funding

To be eligible for award under this solicitation, a non-U.S. NGO applicant may be required to obtain a valid Duns & Bradstreet number (DUNS). Information regarding DUNS registration can be found at <http://www.dnb.com/get-a-duns-number.html>. The program will notify non-U.S. NGO applicants of DUNS requirements where applicable. A U.S. NGO applicant must provide a valid DUNS number, be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) before submitting its application, and continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has: a) an active award with the U.S. Government or b) an application or plan under consideration by the U.S. Government or a U.S. Government implementing partner. Information regarding SAM registration can be found at: <http://www.sam.gov>.

If DUNS is required, the Trade Hub will not issue an award to an applicant until it has complied with this requirement. As the registration process may take several weeks to complete, applicants are encouraged to register early. Please note that completion of an early registration does not constitute any commitment on the part of the Trade Hub to make an award.

4. Submission Date & Time

Applicants must submit their Technical and Cost Applications prior to the closing date and time listed on the cover page. Applications that are submitted late are at risk of not being considered for review. Late applications are marked as “late”. The Trade Hub reserves the right to accept and include late applications in the review and award process only when: a) the Trade Hub considers it to be in its best interest and b) applications received on time have not yet been reviewed.

5. Funding Restrictions

An applicant that receives an award under this RFA is responsible for ensuring that it only incurs post-award costs that were approved and determined to be allowable, allocable, and reasonable by the Trade Hub during pre-award negotiations. Furthermore, the Trade Hub will not reimburse a successful applicant for any costs it incurs prior to the date it signs a grant agreement with the Trade Hub.

6. Pre-Submission Conference

The Trade Hub will hold a Pre-Submission Conference on the date stated in the cover letter for applicants to ask questions and learn more about the submission requirements. Details for the conference, including a link to virtual meeting room, will be posted on the Trade Hub’s website at <https://westafricatradehub.com/>.

7. Questions & Answers

Any questions concerning this RFA must be submitted in writing to grants@westafricatih.com. All questions must be received no later than the Deadline for Questions/Clarifications stated in the cover letter. Responses to questions received prior to this deadline will be furnished to all prospective applicants through an amendment to the RFA.

Any information related to this RFA that is provided to a prospective applicant will be furnished promptly to all other prospective applicants as an amendment to the RFA on condition that: a) it is required to submit an application and/or b) its exclusion would be prejudicial to any other prospective applicant.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each application received by the RFA closing date will initially be reviewed against the eligibility criteria outlined in Section C above. Applications that do not meet these criteria will not be considered for award. Eligible applications that are incomplete will be determined nonresponsive and not considered for award.

Eligible, responsive applications will be reviewed against the technical and cost criteria set forth below. Following this review, an apparently successful applicant may be requested to submit a revised application and/or respond to clarifying questions by a specified date. The Trade Hub reserves the right to award without requesting clarifications or additional detail in an application.

a. Technical Evaluation Criteria

The technical application will be evaluated against the following criteria:

No.	Description	Scoring
1	Objectives of Proposal Points assigned will be based on the extent to which applicants propose innovative solutions that address at least one of the option areas outlined in the RFA. Proposals that offer market-based solutions to more than one option area will be scored higher on this criterion.	0-12%
2	Use of Market-Based Approaches and Sustainability of Business Model Points assigned will be based on the extent to which applicants propose market-based solutions to improve and expand health services and outcomes that are commercially viable and sustainable after USAID funding ends.	0-14%
3	Leverage Ratio Points assigned will be based on the amount of leverage proposed. All applicants must show substantial funding leverage of at least a 1:1 ratio. Activities with higher leverage ratios are strongly preferred. Cash leverage is preferred over in-kind leverage. Therefore, the higher the cash contributions, the higher the application will score on this criterion.	0-10%
4	Opportunities to Partner with Senegalese Companies Points assigned will be based on the extent to which proposed activities create opportunities to partner with Senegalese private sector companies or international joint ventures or partnerships with a Senegalese local partner.	0-14%
5	Additionality Points assigned will be based on the extent to which the co-investments and proposed activities generate clear additionality for USAID funds. This criterion assesses if the private investment and associated development impacts would be unlikely to happen (in the same way, time, or extent) without Trade Hub’s support.	0-12%

6	Phased Results-Based Execution Points assigned will be based on the extent to which the applicant’s proposed activities are results-based and phased in their execution to improve health outcomes.	0-12%
7	Geographic Diversity & Impact Points assigned will be based on the degree to which the applicant’s proposed activities will improve and increase health services and outcomes across a wider geographic area. Projects with investment activities that target multiple regions, urban, rural, and peri urban will be scored higher on this criterion.	0-14%
8	Gender and Youth Inclusion Points assigned will be based on the extent to which women and youth, as direct and indirect beneficiaries, will be engaged in expanded economic opportunities. <i>Note:</i> A target of at least 50% job creation for women and 50% for youth must be met.	0-12%
Total Score		100%

b. *Cost Evaluation Criteria*

Once the technical review of the application(s) is complete, the Trade Hub will evaluate the Cost Application(s) of the apparently successful applicant(s) for cost reasonableness, allocability, and allowability. Additionally, the Trade Hub will complete a capacity and risk assessment for each apparently successful applicant prior to award. It will use the results of the assessment to make a responsibility determination and, when a decision is made to proceed with award, select the appropriate award mechanism.

2. Review and Selection Process

To evaluate applications, the Trade Hub will establish an Investment Committee (IC) comprised of three members with expertise relevant to the program requirements described in this RFA. Throughout the evaluation process, the Trade Hub will take every step to ensure that Trade Hub staff do not have any conflicts of interest or the appearance of such with any organization/individual submitting an application in response to this RFA. An individual shall be considered to have the appearance of a conflict of interest if that individual or that individual’s spouse, partner, child, close friend, or relative works for, is negotiating to work for, and/or has a financial interest (including being an unpaid member of a Board of Directors) in any organization that has submitted an application for review by the Trade Hub. Trade Hub staff shall neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from any applicant.

Fully developed, technically sound applications with competitive private sector match ratios will be shortlisted by the IC and shared with USAID for review and concurrence to proceed to co-creation. The Trade Hub will then initiate its pre-award due diligence process with each shortlisted applicant by requesting: 1) organizational details from the applicant (e.g., registration documents, audited financial statements) and 2) evidence/proof of leverage (e.g., a fully executed loan agreement and/or an investment commitment) from the partner financial institution(s) or outside investor(s), including their contact details, to begin validating proposed co-investments. Concurrently, each shortlisted applicant will begin co-creating on revisions/clarifications to the full application with the Trade Hub, and the Trade Hub’s grants department will conduct a pre-award assessment to assess applicant risk and determine the appropriate grant mechanism. Taken together, these steps allow the Trade Hub to determine the applicant’s viability as a grantee and co-investment partner. As the final step, grant approval packages will be developed for viable applicants that clear the due diligence process and present and successfully negotiate full applications accepted by the Trade Hub’s technical team and Investment Committee.

The commencement of co-creation on a full application does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Trade Hub. Any revised full application requested from the applicant will again be evaluated against the objectives stated in this RFA and the evaluation criteria in Section E.1. After evaluations, clarifications, and any necessary

revisions to the application, the Trade Hub will work with USAID to make a final determination on whether to award a grant agreement. The Chief of Party makes the final decision on which awards under the RFA to submit to USAID for approval.

F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Award Notices

A Notice of Intent to Award will be provided to the point of contact listed in the application of the apparently successful applicant(s). **Please note that such notification does not constitute or guarantee an award.** An apparently successful applicant must first demonstrate that it possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management competence to practice mutually agreed upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided. To this end, the applicant may be required to submit additional information about its organization (e.g., Articles of Incorporation or other documentation substantiating the legal character of the applicant or key individuals within its organization) for vetting purposes. Final issuance of an award will be contingent upon the timely receipt of the information requested and the successful completion of the Program's vetting process and pre-award capacity and risk assessment.

2. Award Administration

Any award resulting from this RFA will be administered in accordance with provisions provided in Attachment 6.

3. Reporting

Reporting requirements (including a reporting schedule) will be provided in the award document for any award resulting from this RFA. The specific reports required will depend on the award type and project duration; however, examples may include the following:

- Monthly Report(s) with activity updates for the reporting period, photos of project activities, challenges encountered during implementation, activities planned for the next reporting period, etc.
- Final Program Report including lessons learned, success stories, any impacts achieved vis-à-vis the funded project's goal and objectives, etc.
- Financial Reports including planned obligations, actual expenditures, funds remaining, etc. as well as a detailed Final Financial Report.
- Reporting on program income (if required).

Please note that issuance of final payment will be contingent upon the Trade Hub's receipt and acceptance of the Final Financial Report and/or Final Program Report. For Fixed Amount Awards (FAAs), final payment is also contingent on the completion of the final milestone and acceptance of its deliverables/means of verification.

4. Marking & Branding Compliance

The applicant(s) selected for award will be required to comply with any applicable marking and branding requirements. Such requirements will be explained to the apparently successful applicant(s) during pre-award negotiations and included in the final award document.

The Trade Hub reserves the right to co-create with and fund one, some, or none of the applications received.
The Trade Hub does not use third-party persons, companies, or organizations to facilitate grant submissions.
The Trade Hub does not charge a fee for any grant submission.

Please report any suspected fraudulent activity to grants@westafricatih.com or hotline@creativedc.com.

Attachment 2: Technical Application Template

To submit your application, please complete the Full Application form that will appear when you log in to the program's SMART grants portal.

Attachment 3: Trade Hub Performance Indicators Table

Please review the health-specific indicators that will appear in the “Attachments” section when you log in to the program’s SMART grants portal and prepare your application.

Attachment 4: Guide on Gender and Youth Integration for Applicants

Click [here](#) for *Guide on Gender and Youth Integration for Applicants*.

Attachment 5: Trade Hub Leverage & In-Kind Contribution Policy

Click [here](#) for *Trade Hub Leverage & In-Kind Contribution Policy*.

Attachment 6: Provisions

Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303maa.pdf>

Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Organizations
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>

Standard Provisions for Fixed Amount Awards to Nongovernmental Organizations
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mat.pdf>

Attachment 7: Certifications

A. CONFLICT OF INTEREST AVOIDANCE CERTIFICATION

When signing a grant agreement with the Trade Hub, a successful applicant's authorized representative will also be required to sign a certification affirming that the entity she/he represents (the Grantee) does not have any conflicts of interest pertinent to the award. Such conflicts would include, for instance:

- Personal or professional relationships with entities that could directly benefit from the award;
- Personal or professional relationships with other staff persons involved in administering the award;
- Personal or professional relationships with government officials that may have influence or oversight of matters directly pertaining to the award;
- Holding formal or informal positions in organizations that would be relevant to the award;
- Holding any financial interest in any entity that would be impacted by the award.

By virtue of the Grantee's actions in carrying out the award, the authorized representative's certification will affirm that she/he would endeavor to ensure that conflicts of interest or their appearance do not arise, understanding that such conflicts of interest would arise when there are situations in which the Grantee is involved in multiple interests (financial, personal, or otherwise) that could be conceived of as corrupting the motivation of herself/himself or the Grantee in the discharge of duties pertinent to the award.

Should such real or perceived conflicts arise, the authorized representative's certification will affirm that the Grantee will immediately inform the Chief of Party of the project with which the award is associated to discuss the matter.

B. OTHER CERTIFICATIONS

When signing a grant agreement with the Trade Hub, a successful applicant will be required to sign the *Certifications, Assurances, Representations, and Other Statements of the Recipient* referenced here: <https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mav.pdf>.

Attachment 8: Environmental Review Guide

Click [here](#) for *Trade Hub Environmental Review Guide*.

Attachment 9: Conflict Risk Checklist

Click [here](#) for *Trade Hub Conflict Risk Checklist*.

Attachment 10: Budget Template

To submit your cost application, please prepare a budget for your proposed project using the budget template included as a separate attachment to this RFA and then upload it to the Cost Application Documents section of the Full Application form in the SMART grants portal.